**Nomen and full heading**:

Without any hints of when Dis would be striking next, Astra suggested they head somewhere that would at least be entertaining – and there was nothing quite like Roman entertainment in the famous Flavian Amphitheatre. Also known as the Colosseum because of the nearby colossal statue of Emperor Nero, the opening of the amphitheater in the year 80 AD was celebrated with over one hundred days of extravagant games.

**Chapter 6 Derivative Hunt**

Packed in the stands tighter than paving stones, Astra started to regret her particular choice of events to attend in the timeline of Roman history. Between the persistence of the mosquitos and her fellow spectators’ bestial cheers and odors, she had to remind herself that she chose this particular adventure of her own volition, though she wondered now if her expectations of naval battles and lavish gladiatorial spectacles with the opening of the Flavian Amphitheatre were a bit delusional. At least being high up in the stands prevented the ghastly aromas of slaughtered beasts from the morning to be too offensive. Beneath the shade of the velarium, Astra caught a peek at the cerulean sky. (11)

A roar rose up from the crowd to greet the gladiators as they convened on the arena floor and Astra leaned forward to get a better view. One particular fighter, an ex-soldier with a pronouncedly aquiline nose, had volunteered to fight for the special occasion. He beat on his chest to show his virility and saluted the emperor. He would be matched against a retiarius fighter whose light armor and trident allowed him to move with feline grace. (6)

Astra turned to her friend. “Tempus, I think I’ve seen enough of these games. Let’s venture out to get some fresh air?” (1)

“I couldn’t agree more,” Tempus said, using his tunic sleeve to wipe the sweat from his forehead.

Astra kneeled to scoop up her pup Fidelis who had been dozing at her feet earlier. “Tempus! Oh no! Where’s Fido?”

A familiar yap caught their attention, and the pair saw a bundle of fur scurrying amongst the crowd in an attempt to elude a group of young boys trying to catch him. (1)

“Hey!” Astra called. “That’s my dog that is loose! Help! Fido, come back!” She darted through the packs of people with Tempus in close pursuit. They chased him out of the stadium, but he vanished down a serpentine avenue. (2)

Moments later, Fido reappeared on the other side of the road. He yapped and wagged his tail, then trotted happily away, circumventing the mobs of people. (1)

“Oh this is just ludicrous. That dog is in so much trouble,” Astra said as she dodged carts and horses to follow. (1)

Soon they were met with a new host of cheers as they followed Fido to the Circus Maximus. Equestrian statues decorated the entrances to commend the races inside. (1)

“There!” Tempus pointed to the tracks. Astra gasped as Fido darted through the hooves of an albino stallion. A charioteer in a ruby-red vest yelled angrily as the dog scampered out of harm’s way. Astra and Tempus ran to the southeastern corner of the tracks just in time to see Fido descend into a sort of subterranean shrine. (3)

The air in the shrine was cool and damp, and all sounds from the nearby crowd eerily dissipated. “What… is… this…?” Astra panted between breaths. Fido whimpered and nuzzled her leg apologetically.

“I’m …not… sure,” Tempus responded. “But something… feels malevolent.” (1)

A large stone altar took up most of the space inside, littered with stale honey cakes and animal bones. A torch with blue flames revealed an inscription.

“Oh no… This is an altar to Dis. We’re in the enemy’s territory,” Tempus whispered. (1)

“Do you think he could be home?” Astra couldn’t tell if she was more curious or frightened, but before she could decide, Fido made a ruckus pawing through a corner obfuscated in shadows. He returned proudly with tablets in his teeth. (1)

Tempus knelt to retrieve the tablets and brushed off the dirt to reveal roughly engraved pictures and letters as Astra peered over his shoulder.

“Looks like another gladiator fan was here,” she said. “That’s a Thracian warrior in the arena.”

“Not just any gladiator – that’s Spartacus.” Tempus inspected it closely. “And this looks like a rather inventive story about him compared to what actually happens in history…like it’s something someone planned to do…” (2)

“Didn’t that one guy defeat Spartacus? Whatshisname…he was a member of the first triumvirate…” (1)

“That’s what happened in the history we know, but it looks like this story may need our help.”

“Crassus! That’s his name!” Astra exclaimed. The torch grew dim at the sound and a chilly wind swept in. Fido jumped into Astra’s arms and whimpered.

“Astra! We have to go!” Tempus clasped her hand as they were swept back 152 years in time.

**Exercise: Derivatives Hunt**

In this story, there are 34 derivatives from some of the words in our Chapter Three vocabulary list. How many can you find? Try to find at least ten and fill in the chart to identify the derivative, the Latin root, and the meaning of the Latin root. The first has been done for you.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **English Derivative** | **Latin root** | **Meaning of root** |
| e.g. event | venio | I come |
| 1. |  |  |
| 2. |  |  |
| 3. |  |  |
| 4. |  |  |
| 5. |  |  |
| 6. |  |  |
| 7. |  |  |
| 8. |  |  |
| 9. |  |  |
| 10. |  |  |